



Businessman plans to start building classic car again



# Return of the Moggy

Morris Minor comeback in a factory made of palm trees

Western Daily Press Reporter

**B**USINESSMAN Charles Ware plans to start making Morris Minors again — 20 years after the last 'Moggy' rolled off the production lines.

Car of the past with a future

THE last Morris Minor was made 20 years ago.

But now a reconditioned Minor, or Moggy as they are affectionately known, can fetch £10,000.

Even one rebuilt eight or nine years ago is probably worth about £7,000.

The ability to produce new ones cheaply in Sri Lanka and export them worldwide should see the Minor well into the 21st Century — but with a modern engine and suspension.

ANTHONY LEWIS

The former art lecturer, who founded the successful Bath-based Morris Minor centre when his property empire collapsed, launches his latest venture later this month in a building made out of coconut trees.

Initially his Durable Car Company of Sri Lanka will employ 50 people making body panels and spare parts for the enduring classic cars.

Within four years they hope to increase the workforce to 1,000.

Mr Ware, aged 55, and his Sri Lankan former diplomat partner Dhanapala Samarasekara hope to build an exceptionally skilled workforce by introducing traditional apprenticeships.

Most of the work will be carried out by hand and Mr Ware said his main aims were to provide jobs and return to the old style methods of producing cars which last.

"We are creating jobs in a country with 30 per cent unemployment. We



Charles Ware with one of his beloved Minors

are reversing the way people look at manufacturing these days and bringing back the old craft system. We are investing in people not automation."

Workers will be paid about £2 a day, a high salary for the country, and the factory will be as "green" as possible with no large machinery pumping fumes into the atmosphere.

Morris cars are still hugely popular in Sri Lanka and throughout Asia where they are used as taxis on the rough roads which cause havoc with modern vehicles. Spare parts will be exported all over the world, including to Britain where 80,000 Minors are still in use.

Mr Ware hopes that within five years the firm will be producing

durable cars based on the Morris design.

In Britain, he says, demand for the cult car, once compared to a poached egg in appearance, is stronger than ever.

Parents approach him to buy a classic vehicle for their children

He says: "The poached egg has sold very well."